

Chaotic 571

Chapter 571: The Battle Skill Heirloom of the Bi Family

Leaving with haste from the Yun family, the young woman rode her Class 1 Magical Beast mount at great speeds down the street. Her body was in a weaker state than before since she had been struck by the head of the family. She had received no major injuries, but she was not a Saint yet. Her body was not accustomed to taking such a blow; thus, it heavily impacted her condition, causing her face to pale.

“I want her captured! You unfilial daughter, who are you to try and kill your own father!?” The angry voice of her father exploded from behind. The fabric on his back was completely drenched in blood. He, along with several dozen soldiers, chased after her with great haste. They were unable to fly through the streets since they were congested, so they had trouble catching up to her. The Yun family didn’t have many magical beasts to begin with; therefore, many of the soldiers could only rely on their legs to run. Only the head of the Yun family and his most loyal soldiers rode a mount. Both groups blazed down the streets.

With both sides racing and crossing over several major streets, they managed to travel several kilometers away from the center of the city. By now, the father had already closed the distance from several hundred meters to just a few dozen.

Seeing that her father was gaining on her, the daughter knew that she wouldn’t be able to escape if this continued. With a moment’s hesitation, she immediately turned into a nearby alleyway.

“Wretched girl, don’t waste your energy! You cannot escape from me. Hurry up and hand over the antidote!” The father roared. His expression was panicked. He could tell the poison within his body was slowly coursing throughout it. The antidotes he had swallowed earlier weren’t able to counteract the poison. The only solution left was to find the actual antidote.

The woman completely ignored the words her father spat out. Urging her steed to run even faster, she finally came to a stop right in front of an inn. She threw herself down from the mount to run in. She knew that the person she was looking for was in this place.

When she ran into the inn, the head of the Yun family and the other soldiers immediately came to a stop by the entrance.

“Surround the inn and prevent that unfilial daughter of mine from escaping. You there, follow me in.” The man commanded before storming into the inn with his soldiers.

At the same time, Jian Chen and his group were gathered together within one of the rooms.

“Jian Chen, the three major clans of Fengyang City have lost plenty of their experts, but their clans still remain. Do you think we should eradicate their clans entirely? After how they treated you two years ago, our strength now would be more than enough to make sure they pay retribution. We shouldn’t let them off so easily, especially the Harido clan. Now that we’ve killed two of their Earth Saint Masters, they won’t take that matter lying down. Even if they don’t do anything now, they will, without a doubt, work against us in the future when the time is right. At the very least, we should cut off the Harido clan and burn the roots so that they will never rise up against us.” Ming Dong proposed.

“Wouldn’t that be too cruel? It was only a single person that offended Jian Chen, and he’s dead now. Why should we involve their clan? They’re innocent in this.” Tie Ta blurted out.

Giving a thoughtful hum, Jian Chen replied, “That much is true. Burning the roots would prevent any future actions against us. The man that slighted me may be dead, but the hatred their clan possesses for me will not be so easily resolved. Since we’ve killed two of their stronger individuals, their hatred will be even deeper. Without a doubt they will bury their feelings and wait for a time to strike when optimal to do the most damage to us.”

“If you think so, then we should take care of the Harido clan straight away after we leave Fengyang City.” Ming Dong spoke.

“There’s no need to rush. Our current task at hand is to further develop our strength and wait until the Flame Mercenaries have established a decent scope of control. Soon, even the Harido clan will ask to join the Flame Mercenaries.” Jian Chen responded. He was very much aware of the fact that killing two individuals would give plenty of trouble for him in the future, so it was best to get rid of the source straight away.

Ming Dong hung his head in thought before realizing something, “Well then, how about this. Why don’t we leave the Harido clan for now and have the Flame Mercenaries take care of them as practice.”

“I have satisfied the grievances I had from my journey to this auction house two years ago. We should rest for the night and leave tomorrow morning for the next First Class City to gather some mercenaries.” Jian Chen replied.

“Fine then, we’ll return first. The Illusionary Flash is far too mysterious for me to comprehend in a single go anyways. Now that my level of comprehension has increased, I feel that I have a better chance of understanding it.” Ming Dong nodded his head as he stood up from his chair.

Jian Chen could only sigh when he heard him mention the Illusionary Flash. There was regret on his face. This battle skill had been profoundly deep, and was regretfully only usable with Saint Force. He was unable to use this battle skill since he had no Saint Force, nothing more could be said about that.

“I wonder just when I will be able to use the Chaotic Force, and if I’ll be able to use the Chaotic Force to use the Illusionary Flash.” Jian Chen thought to himself. He knew that it would be a long journey until he was able to use the Chaotic Force due to the difficulty of cultivating it. His only path as of now was to gather Ruler Armaments and absorb the energy within them to refine them into Chaotic Force. However, it would take a tremendous amount of time to accomplish such a task.

A single wisp of Chaotic Force was equivalent to the strength of a Saint Ruler. Even if he were to refine monster cores into Chaotic Force, it would take a sea of them for a single strand.

“Jian Chen, you should rest up as well. We’ll be taking our leave.” You Yue spoke softly to Jian Chen as they all stood up to leave.

As soon as Ming Dong opened the door, a bright-red blur shot into the room with staggering footsteps before collapsing to the floor.

Jian Chen and Ming Dong strangely looked at the sudden arrival that was this red-skirted young woman. At a glance, they recognized her as the young daughter of the Yun family from a week ago.

“Hey hey, what on earth are you doing barging into our rooms like that?” Ming Dong asked with bemusement.

When she stood back up onto her feet, her face was exuberantly pale and her hair had been frazzled from the wind. Such a disheveled figure like the one she had now was completely different than from the graceful figure she had back then.

The eyes of the young woman shot straight to Jian Chen with a hard to detect hint of panic and apprehension. Hesitating for only a fraction of a moment, she steeled her nerves and said, “My lords, I know that you are all very strong people. I have a matter that I hope that you will be able to help me with; if you help me destroy the Yun family, then I will repay you in kind with an Earth Tier Battle Skill.” Although she looked calm on the outside, her voice had betrayed the nervousness she felt in her heart.

Ming Dong observed the young woman with a pondering glance, “If I remember correctly, you’re the young daughter of the Yun family. How queer, the daughter of the Yun family asking us to eradicate the very same family. Just what type of herb did you mix together and take? You said you have an Earth Tier Battle Skill, how could we believe such a thing, or did you take us to be three year old children?”

Growing more anxious, she pressed on, “It doesn’t matter if you believe me or not. The battle skill I mention is true. As long as you help me destroy the Yun family, I will hand it over to you.”

“So I see, you wretched girl, you’ve been hiding secrets from me all this time!” Suddenly, a furious roar sounded from outside the room as the head of the Yun family and his strong-looking soldiers came into the room. His eyes landed upon Jian Chen and the others. While they all looked young to him, the man knew that they couldn’t be taken lightly if his daughter had spoken to them in such a manner.

“My lords, I am the lord of Fengyang City’s Yun family. This girl here has gone mad and tried to kill her own father. Her words cannot be trusted. Whatever Earth Tier Battle Skill it is, is something she fabricated and cannot be believed. I’ll be taking her back home. If we have bothered you with this scene, I give my utmost apologies.” The man politely explained to Jian Chen. It had only taken a moment for him to devise a plan on what to say. Ever since his daughter had spoken, he could already tell that the gathering of people in this room were not people he could afford to offend.

With that, the head of the Yun family turned to the soldiers outside the room. “What are you loafing around for? Hurry up and escort my daughter back home!”

“Yes!” The soldiers responded before moving to grab her.

As soon as their feet crossed into the room, Dugu Feng had immediately stepped forward to block them from entering. With an intimidating glare, he asked, “Out. Who said you could walk into this room as you please?”

Startled, the head of the Yun family was further convinced that these youths could not be offended at all costs. “Ye-yes. We will not enter the room without your express approval. If we may please implore you to allow us to escort my mad daughter home, we will avoid troubling you all any longer.”

Jian Chen’s eyes stared calmly at the young woman, “Miss, if you may please leave.”

Despair immediately overcame the young woman's face. She knew that whether or not she would survive today was completely dependent on Jian Chen's assistance. She knew that returning to the Yun family would mean eternal imprisonment for her now that her battle skill was known.

Pleading even harder now, she said, "I beg of you to help me. My Advance Earth Tier Battle Skill is yours in return."

The head of the Yun family was ecstatic to hear that it was an Advance Earth Tier Battle Skill. Quickly schooling his emotions, he said, "Crazy girl! My lords, please ignore what my daughter is saying. She doesn't have any battle skills at all; pay no attention to her." He wanted nothing more than to rush up to stuff her mouth to prevent her from talking anymore, but Dugu Feng who was blocking the entryway had intimidated him into inaction.

"If you had an Earth Tier Battle Skill, then why didn't you go seek out one of the other powers in Fengyang City to help do your bidding. I would imagine they would all be more than willing to help for an Earth Tier Battle Skill." Jian Chen inquired.

"There was never a chance in the past, and I was never sure whether or not an Earth Tier Battle Skill would be enough to help me. Now that I am at my wits end, there is no other path to take. I beg of you to believe me. If you can help me, then I will impart my mother's family's battle skill, the Miracle Water of Bi. This is an invaluable battle skill I'm sure!" The woman desperately pleaded. The antidote was on her person. Hence, if she were to be captured and sent back home, then she would never be able to take revenge for her mother. Not only that, her own body would be endlessly tortured for the battle skill, and she had no doubts that her own father would go through any lengths to obtain it.

Upon mention of the battle skill, Jian Chen's face revealed shock. His eyes immediately lit up with a bright glare as he shot straight up from his seat. Astonished, he honed straight on her as he questioned, "What did you say? The Miracle Water of Bi, is that right?" This battle skill had immediately brought forth a surge of emotions that he could not quell. It was by no means an unfamiliar battle skill to him. In fact, it was the battle skill that was passed down from each person in the Bi family.

Chapter 572: The Identity of Bi Lian (One)

Such a major reaction from Jian Chen caused everyone in the room to jump in surprise, especially the ones that knew Jian Chen most like Ming Dong, You Yue, and Dugu Feng. This was the very first time they had witnessed Jian Chen react in such a way, so they were all flabbergasted at his expression, especially since it was only an Earth Tier Battle Skill.

"Jian Chen, what's wrong with this Miracle Water of Bi?" The limpid eyes of You Yue observed Jian Chen as she inquired with a soft voice. It was very melodic to hear, like the song of a song-bird.

Ming Dong and Dugu Feng looked at Jian Chen curiously as well. If a mere Earth Tier Battle Skill could illicit such a reaction from Jian Chen, then surely there was more to the Miracle Water of Bi than what they had initially thought.

They had not been the only ones that were shocked. Even the young woman herself had been startled by Jian Chen's reaction. Dumbstruck, she could only stand there in ignorance, wondering what she had done wrong.

Growing even more nervous, the head of the Yun family glowered at his daughter and boomed, "You crazy girl, don't speak such a tremendous lie. How could you even possibly think that you could lie to such intelligent men like them? Hurry up and come back home with me like a good child." The man was very worried that Jian Chen and the others would seriously believe that she had a battle skill and would interfere. Therefore, he decided to go for broke and charged into the room to grab her. This was his final attempt at trying to take her away to suppress her secret.

Dugu Feng did not stop the man from entering this time, allowing him to charge into the room without a problem. He tried to grab at the woman. However, Jian Chen's eyes flashed dangerously as he growled, "Who let you enter this room, scram!" With a wave of his right hand, a wave of energy from the world burst forth and slammed squarely into the man's body.

The head of the Yun family was only a primary Great Saint Master, and thus possessed no defenses against Jian Chen's strike. Without even being able to react, his body was thrown back from the tremendous strike and into the wall behind him. He had slammed so hard into the wall that there was a crater from where he smashed through it. A splurt of blood could be seen flying out from his mouth.

Jian Chen's control over the energy was exceptionally refined. He had only struck the head of the Yun family himself without any energy splashing over into the inn itself. The tremendous might from the blow had caused the soldiers of the Yun family and even the daughter to be terrified. Everyone could only whip their heads back to Jian Chen with paling faces of terror.

As a primary Great Saint Master, someone like the head of the Yun family could only be considered as a mediocre person within Fengyang City. However, even he would be considered as one of the stronger mediocre people. Therefore, when a person like him was sent flying without resistance by a youth no older than twenty-something, everyone could only look on in shock.

With pointed eyes, Jian Chen stared down the young woman and urged her on, "Do you really have the Miracle Water of Bi?"

She didn't know why Jian Chen was so concerned about the Miracle Water of Bi, but his strength had frightened her so much that she could only nod in silence.

"Ming Dong, hand me a piece of parchment and a brush." He asked Ming Dong.

"Right!" Without delay, Ming Dong turned around to walk out and retrieve both items Jian Chen had asked for from the innkeeper.

Putting both parchment and brush onto a table, Jian Chen told the woman, "Write down all that you know about the Miracle Water of Bi here."

Hearing the non-negotiable order of Jian Chen, the woman hesitated for only a moment before finally responding, "If I write this down, then will you agree to my request? Will you destroy the Yun family and kill the murderer of my mother?"

"I promise." This time, Jian Chen hadn't hesitated to answer.

Having received Jian Chen's promise, the young woman couldn't help but let out a sigh of relief. She knew that this would go against her mother's wishes when she was told to never give it to any outsider, but with the situation as it was, there had been no other choice.

Quickly putting the brush to the parchment, the young woman had soon written down a complete battle skill for Jian Chen.

Taking the word-filled parchment into his hands, Jian Chen began to look at the inner contents. The longer he read, the more thunderstruck he felt.

The Miracle Water of Bi was not unknown to Jian Chen since it was the battle skill that was handed down from generation to generation in the Bi family. Once, his uncle Bi Dao and mother Bi Yuntian had wanted to gift him the battle skill as well, but he was no longer capable of using Saint Force as a whole since he had lost his Saint Weapon. Furthermore, he knew that this Miracle Water of Bi was separated into three stages, the first was a Human Tier, the second was an Earth Tier, and the third was a Heaven Tier.

From what the woman had written down, it fully depicted the first and second stage of the Miracle Water of Bi. Word for word, it was a perfect match to what Bi Dao and his mother had once told him; this was far too much for Jian Chen to believe.

Slowly putting down the piece of paper, Jian Chen looked at the young woman seriously, "Tell me, where did you learn of this Miracle Water of Bi?"

"This was what my mother told me, is there a problem with it?" She answered with a puzzled expression.

"What was the name of your mother?"

When Jian Chen asked her, the young woman began to think hard, searching the deepest parts of her mind where memories of her kind and caring mother were kept. She couldn't help but begin to tear up from these nostalgic but painful memories as she sobbed out, "My mother was called Bi Yunhai!"

As if struck by lightning, Jian Chen's entire body began to shake as the parchment with the battle skill fell from his hands. In disbelief, Jian Chen looked at the young woman in despondence, "Bi Yunhai. Bi Yunhai. Your mother had the surname of Bi..."

Ming Dong and the others stared in confusion at Jian Chen; they didn't know what had happened to the Bi family, and didn't understand the relationship Jian Chen had with them. Naturally, they wouldn't know why Jian Chen would be so taken aback when he heard that the young woman's mother had the last name of Bi.

"Brother, are you okay?" Ming Dong couldn't help but ask in concern. As Jian Chen was his brother, the mood of Jian Chen would influence him as well.

Quashing down the surge of emotions that was assaulting his mind, Jian Chen slowly shook his head. "I'm fine." with that, his eyes turned back to fixedly stare at the young woman. In this single moment, the expression in his eyes drastically changed.

"What is your name?" Jian Chen asked with a surprisingly warm and kind voice.

"My name is Yun Lian!" She replied. Her bright eyes stared curiously at Jian Chen as if confused about the look Jian Chen was giving her. She was a clever person and could sense the change in Jian Chen's voice, but it confounded her on why it had happened in the first place.

“Your mother has already died, correct?” Jian Chen asked.

Upon mention of her mother, Yun Lian’s eyes began to well up with tears once more before giving a grieved nod of her head.

Sighing, Jian Chen replied, “So your mother never told you about the Bi family.”

Yun Lian looked blankly at Jian Chen before shaking her head. She had not a single iota of knowledge relating to the Bi family.

“How did your mother die?” Jian Chen asked one word at a time with each pause growing even more cold than before.

A furious glare emerged from Yun Lian’s eyes as she tightly clenched her teeth. “My mother was beaten to death by the head of the Yun family. He is a beast in the shape of a man. For the sake of learning the Miracle Water of Bi from my mother, he tried to beat it out of her. But my mother was unwilling. Her body had already been weak, and after such an inhuman beating, she was unable to endure it any more. She left the world...”

Yun Lian burst into tears at this point, “My mother’s death was far too cruel. I must take revenge for the sake of my mother. Her murderer is no man, but a beast in disguise!” Although the head of the Yun family was her father, Yun Lian felt no emotions for him besides hatred.

Jian Chen’s fist had tightened so much that the knuckles in his hand released a series of crackling sounds in symbolization of his anger.

“Dugu Feng, bring the head of the Yun family here right now.” Jian Chen growled.

Dugu Feng gave a deep stare at Jian Chen before turning around to leave. Quickly bringing back the injured man, he tossed the man unceremoniously onto the ground.

The head of the Yun family had been grievously injured after receiving a single strike from Jian Chen. Even now, he found himself without the energy to stand back up. An Earth Saint Master wouldn’t be able to take the strike of a Heaven Saint Master let alone a Great Saint Master.

“You beast! I’ll definitely make sure you’ll be buried with my mother!” Yun Lian immediately kicked her father’s head with hatred. After carefully hiding her emotions for so long, she had finally found an opportunity to take revenge. The violent hate she felt was now spilling out all at once.

No one in the room stopped her. They decided to watch from the sidelines. The treatment that her mother had suffered by the hands of this man for a battle skill was more than enough for them all to be filled with anger as well.

After a moment, Yun Lian finally grew tired. Falling to the ground, she began to cry, tears streaming down. No one could understand her mind, and no one could understand the torment and pain she felt. On one hand, the head of the Yun family was her father, and on the other hand, it was he that had killed her mother. Confronted with such a cruel choice, it couldn’t possibly be a light situation for anyone else to take.

Chapter 573: The Identity of Bi Lian (Two)

Yun Lian remained sprawled on the ground for some time before she finally cried herself to exhaustion. Her tears ceased, and the only thing left was pain.

A sigh escaped from Jian Chen's mouth as he stared at Yun Lian. Turning to Dugu Feng, he said, "Escort the man down, but make sure he doesn't run away."

Dugu Feng sensed that there had to be some sort of special connection between Yun Lian and Jian Chen. With the hatred between Yun Lian and the head of the Yun family, he decided not to ask about it for now. He nodded his head in a serious manner. "Very well. I'll look over him carefully." The man was picked up by Dugu Feng like a clump of mud, and carried out of the room.

Jian Chen hesitated for a moment as he watched Yun Lian. Finally, he said, "Come with me to the Gesun Kingdom."

She had not expected to hear the words that had come out of Jian Chen's mouth. The one's about going to the Gesun Kingdom, and thus, she was shocked as a result. Looking suspiciously at Jian Chen, she asked, "Why should I go with you to the Gesun Kingdom?"

"To confirm something. Perhaps you'll find family there." Jian Chen replied. All sorts of emotions were running through his mind at that moment. Who would have thought that a person he met just a few days ago would be a member of the Bi family?

"My family?" Yun Lian whispered for a moment before shaking her head in sorrow. "No, I have no family left. The only one I had was my mother, but even she is gone now. My father is no man, but a beast. He isn't my rightful father. I'll make sure to kill him by my own hand to satisfy my mother's revenge." Yun Lian bitterly cried out.

Slowly walking to Yun Lian, Jian Chen said once more, "Come with me to the Gesun Kingdom. There is one thing I must confirm. It relates to your mother."

"To my mother? What could that be?" Yun Lian's eyes lit up as if her interest had been piqued.

"I don't have the words to say it right now. Wait until you come to the Gesun Kingdom, you will understand then." Jian Chen explained in a serious tone.

She hesitated. This matter was surprisingly related to her mother, so she couldn't be indifferent to it. After a moment's hesitation, she finally nodded her head in agreement. "Fine, I will go with you to the Gesun Kingdom."

"Then, let us go right now." Jian Chen impatiently responded. Turning to Ming Dong and the others, he said, "I will return to the Gesun Kingdom first. Wait for me here until I get back. If anything happens, break this jade stone." With that, Jian Chen handed a piece of jade to Ming Dong. This was an especially precious jade stone on the Tian Yuan Continent that would cause its sister stone to break apart at the same time when crushed, no matter how far the distance was in between the two. As such, it was considered a surefire method of signaling.

The group knew that this situation held more to it than they had thought. It wasn't something they could even imagine, so they decided not to ask for now.

Taking the jade stone from Jian Chen, Ming Dong replied to him in serious manner, "Brother, come back quickly."

Nodding his head, Jian Chen gave his farewells to everyone before walking back to Yun Lian. "Is there anything else you have left to do here? If not, then we'll be on our way."

"There's nothing. But we're a long way from the Gesun Kingdom, shouldn't we prepare for our travel?" Yun Lian asked.

"No need, we'll be there very quickly." Jian Chen answered. Holding onto Yun Lian's arm, Jian Chen waved his hand. With a single thought, he enveloped them both with a bubble of wind. Before she could even react, Yun Lian and Jian Chen immediately shot from the room into the sky. Like a bright burst of azure light, they ascended into the sky at a lightning-quick speed. So fast that the bystanders in the streets had been unable to make out what it was.

The sudden sensation of being shot into the sky had frightened Yun Lian so much that she had cried out and turned pale in terror. When she recovered, she could only hear the wind streaming through her ears and blowing her hair everywhere. Under her feet, Fengyang City had been reduced to a very small area. The previously giant city was now completely viewable in its entirety. Even the throngs of people on the streets had been reduced to the size of ants with no distinguishing characteristics between each one.

Stunned at the sight of the still rapidly diminishing city, Yun Lian was silent for a long while. At that current moment, she was terribly frightened and could not keep her heart in check.

It did not take long for Fengyang City to disappear into the horizon underneath the two. The scenery of the rest of the world gradually grew fainter before a plume of clouds started to obscure the ground from sight. Jian Chen had brought Yun Lian over a sea of clouds. Nothing else could be seen but the whiteness from the tops of the clouds.

After what seemed like a long while, Yun Lian finally regained her ability to think coherently. With eyes wide open, she stared in disbelief at the young but handsome face of Jian Chen with one hand over her mouth in shock. "Yo-you-you're a... a Heaven Saint Master!"

A tidal wave of emotions overcame Yun Lian's mind at that point. A Heaven Saint Master was among the strongest on the continent. On the power structure, they were nearly at the top, and would be heads above anyone else if put in any random kingdom. Even a king would have to treat them as majestic and illustrious entities with most haste. Their very existences were the same as being compared to an entire kingdom. The rise or fall of a kingdom was completely dependent on where the Heaven Saint Master was in the equation.

Yun Lian hadn't thought it was possible that the youth right next to her would actually be a Heaven Saint Master. In the eyes of a commoner, men like these were god-like.

The Yun family was a small household, but as their treasured daughter, Yun Lian was gifted in her intelligence. She herself knew clearly what a Heaven Saint Master meant. As long as there was a Heaven Saint Master in place, then even a nobody clan would leap several rungs on that ladder to become one of the strongest powers in any kingdom.

With a hand covering her wide open mouth, she continued to stare at Jian Chen in mute silence. A Heaven Saint Master was indeed too much for her to take in at once.

Seeing shocked expression on Yun Lian's face, Jian Chen couldn't help but reveal a small smile. He didn't bother to explain anything. He just continued to hurry on his way as if impatient to quickly arrive back at the Changyang clan to prove Yun Lian's identity.

It took six hours before Jian Chen finally arrived at the Gesun Kingdom. Without even stopping, he rushed on toward Lore City.

After a single hour, the two of them finally arrived outside of Lore City. From far away, plenty of tents could be seen set up away from the city walls. Above each tent was a banner with the "Qin" symbol emblazoned on it.

After such a long travel time, Yun Lian had already regained some semblance of tranquility. Seeing the barracks over there, she asked out of curiosity, "Is that the army from the Qinhuang Kingdom?"

"Correct. There is about half a million soldiers from the Qinhuang Kingdom. With the name of the Eastern Deity Swords, they are one of the strongest armies of the Qinhuang Kingdom." Jian Chen explained.

"Then this city must be Lore City. The rumors are true then. The Qinhuang Kingdom and the Changyang clan have a connection between the two if the army is stationed here." Yun Lian muttered with admiration. The Qinhuang Kingdom was one of the Eight Great Powers on the continent, and with their support, the name of the Gesun Kingdom had been established as the dominant power over this area with no other equal.

Continuing to fly into the city like a bright bullet made of azure light, the two of them entered Lore City before Yun Lian could even properly study it. In seconds, they finally touched down in front of a giant compound, the Changyang Manor.

"Follow me in!" Jian Chen released Yun Lian's shoulder, and called out for her to follow him into the grounds.

Surveying the compound, Yun Lian's eyes subconsciously hovered over the giant signboard on top of the gates where the three words, "Changyang Manor" had been carved out in fancy calligraphy. At this sight, Yun Lian immediately turned pale.

Although she had lived her entire life in Fengyang City, she was aware of the events that had occurred in the Gesun Kingdom. The matters relating to the Changyang clan were especially clear to her.

The Changyang clan was once a rather low-profile clan within the Gesun Kingdom. After the war between the four kingdoms and the Gesun Kingdom, the might of the Changyang clan was brought forth for the whole world to see. Hence, they became well known as a result. Even after that, when the ten Heaven Saint Masters from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom attacked, they were forced back by the clan and had lost several of their members as a result. Such a battle had further increased the Changyang clan's name. They deserved to be recognized as the strongest in the Gesun Kingdom. Completely replacing the Huayun Sect as the strongest power, not even the royal family could stop them.

The extremely high status that the Changyang clan had obtained couldn't even be compared to the Yun family who was insignificant in Fengyang City. They were ants in comparison to the three major clans in that city, but similarly, those three clans would be insects in comparison to the Changyang clan who was already heads above the royal family in might.

Yun Lian had never expected to see herself stand outside the gates to the Changyang clan; this was a clan that she regarded favorably.

Hurriedly pulling at Jian Chen's robes, she said with worry, "This is the Changyang clan. Why did you bring me here? Are you sure we didn't fly to the wrong place?"

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, "Don't worry, there's no problems here. Follow me." With that, Jian Chen pulled Yun Lian through the doors.

Upon Jian Chen's entrance, the two soldiers guarding the entryway had snapped to salute with the utmost amount of respect they could muster. As Jian Chen grew closer, the two of them bowed down at the same time, "We pay our respects to the fourth master!"

The loud shouts of the two frightened the timid Yun Lian who was right beside Jian Chen. Suddenly, her mind registered what had been said which caused her to snap her head back to Jian Chen. "Fourth master? Are you the famous fourth master of the Changyang clan, Changyang Xiangtian?"

Chapter 574: The Identity of Bi Lian (Three)

Yun Lian stared at Jian Chen with wide open eyes of shock. Changyang Xiangtian, the fourth master of the Changyang clan was a name that practically everybody in this region had heard about. He was an idol that practically every youth worshipped and strived to be.

Not only was he a Heaven Saint Master, he was also the Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom. Each title he owned was more than enough for everyone to see him as an entity worthy of respect. These two titles were as good as halos that enveloped his entire person. Therefore, every youth recognized him as a god that overlooked the country from his domain, and nobody could encroach upon that domain.

Jian Chen smiled when he saw the astonished look on Yun Lian's face. "Come inside then." He spoke as he led the still surprised Yun Lian inside the manor.

"So you were the fourth master of the Changyang clan, Changyang Xiangtian. I should have realized that. Aside from the fourth master of the clan, who else could possibly be a Heaven Saint Master at such an age?" Yun Lian muttered as she looked at Jian Chen with eyes of adoration.

The newly established Changyang Manor's architecture was beautiful. If the old building was night, then the new building was day. Even the interior had become far more imposing. No matter where one looked, a squadron of guards could be seen walking about as they patrolled the grounds with diligence. The pride of even the soldiers could not be contained on their faces. To them, being the guards of the Changyang clan was an unbelievable honor that even their ancestors would be proud of.

It also went without saying that the fourth master of the Changyang clan would be the person they respected the most. All Jian Chen had to do was walk on over and every guard would immediately bow their backs with the utmost respect.

Walking through the compound, Yun Lian continued to turn her head at every corner to inspect the scenery with great curiosity. All sorts of emotions ran through her mind in violent waves; the Changyang clan was a clan that was too high for her to reach even if it was just her eyes that touched it. She never expected to be able to personally visit their compound.

There were no further obstructions for either of the two as they walked to the room of Jian Chen's mother, Bi Yuntian. Quickly, Jian Chen walked to her door. The guards and maids stationed there bowed down in a hurry, "We pay our respects to the fourth master!"

"Is my mother inside?" Jian Chen asked the two maids.

"My lady is currently inside resting, fourth master." One of the maids respectfully answered.

After the maid had spoken, the doors suddenly opened to reveal the white-robed Bi Yuntian. When she saw Jian Chen, her eyes lit up with excitement, "Xiang'er, when did you come back? Why did you not send a message to your mother earlier?" There was a kind and loving tone to her voice. She truly loved this child of hers, and she was so proud of him, especially with his many accomplishments.

Curiously, Bi Yuntian looked at the graceful Bi Yuntian, "Is this Changyang Xiangtian's mother? Strange, why does she look similar to my mother?"

Jian Chen felt warm from the loving eyes his mother used on him. He smiled in return. "Mother, I actually came back for a rather important matter. Let us go inside your room first."

Leading Yun Lian into the room, Jian Chen and Bi Yuntian walked over to the table meant for receiving guests, and sat down there.

As soon as the three sat down, Bi Yuntian couldn't help but ask, "Xiang'er, who might this young lady be?" Even as she was speaking, Bi Yuntian was already pouring a cup of tea for the two to drink with a benevolent and motherly hand.

There was a rather uncomfortable look in Jian Chen's eyes as he looked at Yun Lian. "Mother, she is called Yun Lian, a citizen from the Blue Wind Kingdom, but her mother is someone I believe you might recognize."

"Oh? Whom might that be? I have always lived within the Changyang Manor since my marriage. There aren't many that I know." Bi Yuntian gently laughed.

Jian Chen hesitated for a brief moment before attentively looking back to his mother, "Mother, do you happen to know a person named Bi Yunhai?"

"Clatter!"

As soon as that name was mentioned, the tea pot in Bi Yuntian's hand fell to the table. It spilled the tea water inside all over the table.

Not even taking notice of the fact that her clothes were slowly getting wet from the tea water, Bi Yuntian stared at Jian Chen with piercing eyes. She questioned with a quavering voice, "What did you say? Xiang'er, have you seen my younger sister Yunhai? Is she still alive? Where is she?" Bi Yuntian's voice grew more and more frantic.

Seeing such a large reaction from her, Jian Chen was able to confirm the guess in his mind. Yun Lian's mother was indeed a member of the Bi family. It would also appear that the relationship between her and his mother was extremely close.

Yun Lian clearly heard each and every word from Bi Yuntian, but the meaning behind her words knocked her for a loop. From the very start, she couldn't possibly guess just what sort of relationship there was between her mother and the Changyang clan.

A mental sigh escaped from Jian Chen. He knew that Bi Yuntian would feel anguished when she learned that Bi Yunhai had already passed on.

"Mother, Yun Lian is Bi Yunhai's daughter. She is also in possession of our Bi family's Miracle Water of Bi." Jian Chen explained in serious tone.

Bi Yuntian's eyes honed in on Yun Lian as if to study the details of her face. Slowly walking up to her, Bi Yuntian tenderly took hold of Yun Lian's hands. She softly said, "So you were the daughter of my younger sister. Yes. Yes, you look quite similar to her when she was young. Lian'er, tell your aunt quickly. Where is your mother? Has she been well?"

The words "aunt" felt very foreign to Yun Lian, and her mind went blank as a result. The fourth lady of the Changyang clan and the mother of Changyan Xiangtian was her aunt? This sudden development had caused her to stiffen up into silence, unable to speak.

Bi Yuntian looked at Yun Lian with a gentle and warm light as if she was regaling her like she was her own daughter.

"Lian'er, tell your aunty. Where is your mother? Is she doing well?" She asked once more, tears springing forth from her eyes.

As soon as she heard mention of her mother, Yun Lian couldn't stop the stinging tears of pain from welling up in her eyes. As they streamed down her cheeks, she let out a whimper, "My mother has already passed on."

The expression on Bi Yuntian's face immediately froze in disbelief. Momentarily losing her voice, she stuttered, "What? Yunhai has... she's... she..." Bi Yuntian's feet gave way to her body, causing her to stagger and fall.

"Mother, careful!" Jian Chen cried out in alarm before quickly moving to his mother's side. Gingerly supporting Bi Yuntian back to her stool, he looked on in concern at his mother's pained face. He tried to console her, "Mother, please don't feel too hurt, this matter happened a long time ago."

Tears of grief sprang from her eyes like a fountain. Bi Yuntian's previous elation had instantaneously turned into anguish as she sobbed. "Lian'er, tell your aunty. How did your mother die?"

Yun Lian recalled the whole story for Bi Yuntian to hear. When she heard how Bi Yunhai had been beaten to death by the head of the Yun family for the battle skill, Bi Yuntian became even more grieved. She couldn't help but bitterly cry.

"Yunhai, my sister! Your death was a wretched one! Blame your useless older sister. If I had known earlier, then you wouldn't have had to suffer such misery." Bi Yuntian wailed in anguish.

“Aunty, did you know my mother?” Yun Lian managed to ask a question through her tears.

“Lian’er, your mother was my favorite sister. We were from the same Bi family, and that means your grandfather and my father were one in the same. But ever since the calamity that befell our Bi family, many of our relatives have been killed off. Even your grandfather was killed. All that was left was my elder brother and I. The two of us had thought that we were the only ones left. Never did I imagine that Yunhai managed to escape as well. It is to my regret that I learned about this too late; otherwise I would never have let Yunhai suffer so much.”

Bi Yuntian could only feel regret when she thought about how Yun Lian’s mother had been beaten to death. She couldn’t possibly imagine just how much her younger sister had suffered under the hands of someone so inhumane.

“Sister Yunhai has suffered for far too long. I will make sure that her vengeance will be served by killing that beast of a man.” Bi Yuntian’s eyes radiated a furious light as she angrily spoke

“Then does that mean you’re... really my aunt?” Yun Lian’s teary eyes looked to Bi Yuntian.

Bi Yuntian nodded her head. “Lian’er, I am your aunt, and Changyang Xiangtian is your older cousin!”

Yun Lian’s entire person froze up at that declaration as she registered Bi Yuntian’s words. For a small moment, she couldn’t believe her ears. The fourth lady of the Changyang clan was her aunt, and the Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom and the fourth master of the Changyang clan, Changyang Xiangtian, was her older cousin.

This situation was totally unbelievable in the mind of Yun Lian. She had completely worshipped geniuses like Changyang Xiangtian, and now that figure was her cousin?

Even Jian Chen felt rather stunned from where he was. Looking blankly at Yun Lian, he found it hard to remain calm. Not once did he ever imagine that the young miss of the Yun family back in Fengyang City would be his younger cousin.

Chapter 575: A New Family Member

The sudden introduction of a younger cousin made Jian Chen feel quite complex. He wasn’t sure if he was happy or worried.

Yet, Jian Chen felt like rejoicing over his decision to not drive out Yun Lian from his room in the inn. If he had, then Yun Lian would have definitely suffered at the hands of her father, who would have done all that he could to extract the battle skill from her. If he was willing to treat his wife that way, he would treat his daughter in a similar fashion. The Yun family was a small one after all, and an Earth Tier Battle Skill was far too important.

Yun Lian’s mother had most likely wanted no pressure to befall her daughter, so she had never told her a single thing about the Bi family. Until Yun Lian had met Jian Chen, she had never known the true identity of her mother.

The demise of Bi Yunhai had given Bi Yuntian a tremendous amount of grief, but the fact that her daughter was still alive gave her some solace. Her treatment of Yun Lian would be the same as if she was

taking care of her own son. Although Yun Lian was not her own flesh and blood, Bi Yuntian would treat her as if she was with all the love and care she possessed.

Afterward, Bi Yuntian slowly started to explain the history of the Bi family to Yun Lian so that she could understand why her mother had never told her anything about her past. What Yun Lian couldn't believe was that her deceased mother was once the direct descendant of a powerful family.

The three of them remained within the room for more than two hours, giving them all plenty of time to recover from any residual grief.

"Xiang'er, treat her as you would your sister. With your power, you must ensure that you protect her. Don't let your cousin suffer any more. She has already suffered enough." Bi Yuntian made a request to Jian Chen.

Jian Chen nodded with a serious but honest expression as he pledged, "Mother, don't you worry. I will definitely protect Yun Lian. I won't let her feel anymore grievances."

Yun Lian's mind was sent into a flux once more when she heard Jian Chen's words. She felt as if she was in a dream that was far too mystical to even be a dream. In the span of four hours, her identity had experienced a tremendous transformation. This to her was something that she had a hard time stomaching.

The Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom, Changyang Xiangtian, was the person she had regarded the most. However, he was a figure she could only look at and not touch. Now, he was suddenly her older cousin, and he had even pledged to protect her from any harm or sorrow. Yun Lian really felt as if she had suddenly been transported into a dreamworld.

Softly pulling at Yun Lian's hand, Bi Yuntian said, "Lian'er, your father treated your mother and you inhumanely. Forsake your last name of Yun and return to your roots as a member of Bi. Starting from today, you should take on the surname of Bi. Call yourself Bi Lian. You will be a member of the Changyang clan, and will have nothing more to do with the Yun family."

Hesitating for the longest time, Yun Lian finally nodded her head before replying meekly, "Aunty, I understand. But wouldn't the other members of the Changyang clan see me as an outsider?" There was concern on her face.

A faint smile appeared on Bi Yuntian's face. "Good good, you will now go by the name Bi Lian. Lian'er, you needn't worry about a thing. With your cousin, no one will dare bully you. You don't even need to worry about the other members from the Changyang clan. From the outside, it would seem that the power of the clan resides within the master of the household or the abdicated elders. In reality, it is your cousin that holds all of the power. Not a single person would dare ignore his words. Even the king of the Gesun Kingdom is no exception."

Once more, Bi Lian felt shocked at Bi Yuntian's words before turning to Jian Chen. She knew that Jian Chen held supreme status within the Gesun Kingdom, but she didn't think that his status would be the same within the clan itself, especially if he reigned over the family head and the elders.

Pulling Bi Lian up, Bi Yuntian said, "Lian'er, it's getting late. Why don't we go eat a meal. I can introduce you to my husband and Chang Bai. Given some time, your aunty will take you to the imperial palace to

see your uncle. Your uncle works as the captain commander of the imperial palace, so unless there is something important, he won't come to visit."

Hearing that her uncle was the captain commander of the Gesun Kingdom, Bi Lian could really cement the fact that in a short few hours, her status had made a world-turning change. Being the golden daughter to the Yun family couldn't even compare.

Yet, this change had been too sudden. She found it hard to react.

"If my mother had known that aunty was alive and well, then perhaps she wouldn't have died." Bi Lian thought to herself.

Afterward, Jian Chen and his mother led Bi Lian to the dining halls for a meal. At the table, Bi Lian came across the family head and his other wives. Bi Yuntian revealed Bi Lian's identity to them, but she had not go in depth with the matters relating to the Bi family. She only revealed that Bi Lian was the daughter of her long-lost sister.

Everyone was receptive to Bi Lian without a single objection. Everything was all due to the outstanding son of Bi Yuntian after all.

The meal was exuberantly cheerful, and Changyang Ba, Ling Long, and Yu Fengyan treated Bi Lian very amiably. The only one that acted unnaturally was third aunt Bai Yushuang.

The third aunt was someone that Jian Chen didn't even feel like greeting nowadays. Since his childhood, she had always objected to him and fought him over everything. When he had just returned to the Changyang clan, the third aunt had exploded to the point of being unable to stand him. If not for the fact that she was his aunt, Jian Chen wouldn't have forgiven her.

After the meal, Bi Yuntian led Bi Lian to her very own room while Jian Chen walked by himself to his own building in the compound to rest.

Night quickly gave way to day. In the morning, Jian Chen said his farewells to Changyang Ba before taking Bi Yuntian and Bi Lian into the air. They headed away from the manor toward the Blue Wind Kingdom.

Bi Yuntian harbored a very deep hatred for the one that had killed her younger sister. Without listening to anyone, she wanted Jian Chen to bring her to the Blue Wind Kingdom, so she take revenge. Unable to compromise, Jian Chen could only look helplessly from the side before agreeing to take her to the Blue Wind Kingdom.

After several hours of flight, Jian Chen returned to the same inn in Fengyang City. At that moment, Ming Dong, You Yue, Tie Ta, and Dugu Feng were all stepping out from the inn.

When they saw that Jian Chen had quickly returned, they were excited to see him. When their eyes landed on Bi Yuntian beside him, they looked at her in bewilderment.

"Ah, mother-in-law, what brings you here?" You Yue asked the white-robed but graceful Bi Yuntian a question from her surprise.

Bi Yuntian smiled and exchanged several words of greeting to You Yue before turning back to Jian Chen. With impatience, she said, "Xiang'er, where is the murderer of my younger sister?"

Turning to Dugu Feng, Jian Chen commanded, "Bring out the head of the Yun family."

Soon enough, the thin and sallow figure of the head of the Yun family was brought out by Dugu Feng. When she saw the killer of her sister, Bi Yuntian was unable to maintain her composure. Thus, she immediately started to kick at the man with fury.

"You immoral beast! Sister Yunhai was undoubtedly a treasure to behold by you, yet you failed to cherish the treasure that was my sister! Even worse, you beat her to death? I will make you pay for that crime with your life!" Bi Yuntian wailed in anguish as she furiously beat the man. When she thought back to her closest younger sister she and how she had been killed by this man, she could only feel anguish.

Bi Yuntian's actions caused Ming Dong, You Yue, Dugu Feng, and Tie Ta to look on with wide eyes and open mouths. Absolutely bewildered, they could only stare at her and then at each other, but not a single one of them knew what to do or say.

The still-mourning Yun Lian was unable to stop herself as well. With both feet, she continued to kick at the head of her father while crying incessantly.

"Stop! Lian'er, I am your father! I may have done wrong with your mother, but you cannot treat me this way! I am your father, your family! Your father has done wrong, your father wishes to apologize! Please forgive your father; if you don't give your father the antidote, your father will die from this poison!" He cried out with his head on the ground. With his body extremely battered and the poison having already taken root, he had lost the most basic of motor functions in his body. The only way he would survive now would be if his daughter gave him the antidote.

"You aren't fit to be my father. I don't have a father that is as cruel as you! From here on out, I forsake the last name of Yun and will take on the surname Bi!" Bi Lian howled with tears.

After beating the man soundly for a moment, the two women finally stopped to catch their breaths.

"Lian'er, take your aunty to see your mother's grave." Bi Yuntian commanded.

Nodding, Bi Lian took the group away from the inn while Dugu Feng was once more put in charge of guarding the head of the Yun family.

Quickly, the group arrived within a small grotto outside Fengyang City. The tomb of Bi Yunhai was rather simple with a small mound and a tombstone that was about half the height of a person. The words on the tombstone had been inscribed with "The grave of Bi Yunhai."

Seeing the simple and crude tombstone of Bi Yunhai, Bi Yuntian's eyes couldn't help but begin to flow with tears once more. Slowly kneeling down by the grave, she gingerly touched the dusty tombstone as if it was the face of her sister and not cold hard stone.

Chapter 576: Carrying the Coffin Into the City

Bi Yuntian knelt down by Bi Yunhai's grave and tenderly touched the ice-cold gravestone. Droplets of tears flowed from her eyes as she revealed a sorrowful expression. In her mind, she couldn't help but think back twenty years ago when she was with her younger sister Bi Yunhai. Everyday with her had been a day of joy and happiness. They were practically inseparable. They would play with one another, eat with one another, and never were they ever apart.

“Sister Yunhai, everything was your sister’s fault. I was unable to do anything. If I had known that you had escaped as well, I would never have allowed you to fall to such a state. Sister Yunhai, you suffered plenty those years. Even in your death your grave is a simple one. Blame your older sister for being inconsiderable.” Bi Yuntian wailed in grief.

“Mother, your daughter will soon take revenge for you. Your daughter will personally kill the beast that claimed your life. Please, mother, rest in peace.” Bi Lian knelt beside the grave and wailed alongside Bi Yuntian.

Seeing the pained look on their faces, Jian Chen felt a wave of grief in him well up from where he stood to the side, but he did not speak. Right by his side, Ming Dong, You Yue, and Tie Ta were all flabbergasted by the strange sight in front of them. Not a single one of them knew what was happening, nor did they understand the sudden a relationship between Bi Lian’s mother and Bi Yuntian.

Unable to hold her silence after a short while, You Yue finally whispered to Jian Chen, “Jian Chen, what is going on here? How did this situation happen?”

Sighing, Jian Chen explained, “Yun Lian’s mother and my mother were sisters. She no longer goes by the name Yun Lian. Now she goes by Bi Lian. By rights, she is my cousin.”

Ming Dong and You Yue’s mouth dropped wide open at this piece of information from the shock they received.

“What? The young daughter of the Yun family is your younger cousin!” You Yue exclaimed in shock.

“That’s utterly unbelievable!” Ming Dong cried out as well before looking back to Bi Lian who was crying by the grave. He never imagined that the golden daughter that had barged into their room two days ago would actually be Jian Chen’s cousin.

Jian Chen watched his mother cry in grief for a small moment longer before finally walking up to console her, “Mother, please don’t feel sad. The dead cannot come back to life, and aunty Yunhai passed away years ago.”

Wiping her tears away, Bi Yuntian gave a small sob, “Sister Yunhai, you must have felt alone resting in this place by yourself for so many years. Worry not my sister. Now that I have finally found you, there is no way I won’t bring you back to Changyang Manor. I will be with you daily. You won’t be lonely anymore.” Moving to the back of the gravestone, Bi Yuntian gently hugged the stone, and let her tears drop onto the tough earth below.

After years and years of weathering the wind, rain, and harsh sunlight, the soil had grown dry and rigid. After several attempts to dig out the soil with her tender fingers, Bi Yuntian’s fingers had chafed up and started to bleed.

However, she did not seemed to notice nor care. The pain that she felt in her fingers was incomparable to the pain she felt in her heart, so with all of her energy, she dug at the gravestone. With thoughts of bringing the grave of her sister away from here.

Such a sight hurt Jian Chen tremendously. Hurriedly grabbing hold of his mother’s arm, he pleaded with her, “Mother, don’t be like this, stop. Let your son do this, please rest for now.”

Bi Yuntian shook her head, "No. I must save my sister myself. I will take my sister Yunhai back to Changyang Manor with my own two hands." Digging with all her might, her previously jade-like fingers were covered with both dirt and blood. The ground had become stained with her blood.

"Mother, please let your son help you." If he could not stop her, then Jian Chen would have to follow his mother's plan and take part himself. Moving to dig out the grave half as tall as he was, Jian Chen tried his best to alleviate his mother's pains as much as possible.

Bi Lian quickly joined the two of them next to the grave. Together, the three dug at the grave with only their hands. "Mother, your daughter has done you wrong by letting you rest alone in this desolate wasteland for so many years. Mom, you'll have a new home and family soon. Your daughter will follow you there. You won't be alone anymore."

"Allow me to help you aunty." You Yue was moved by such a display. Holding back her tears, she knelt in front of the grave and began to use her tender, white hands to dig at the dirt.

Ming Dong displayed a complicated look on his face as he watched. Without a word, he followed You Yue's example to kneel by the grave, and used his own fingers to dig into the dirt to excavate the tomb underneath. In the end, even Tie Ta joined their attempt.

Under the orderly movements of everyone, the grave was quickly excavated. Just two meters beneath the earth was a single dark coffin.

"Mother!" Seeing this coffin, Bi Lian's sorrows and pains exploded all at once in the form of a single pain-filled howl. If not for Jian Chen stopping her, she would have most likely jumped down to hold the coffin.

Jian Chen's heart was full of sorrow at the sight of this muddy coffin. Letting out a mental sigh to himself, he slowly levitated the coffin out of the ground by using the energy of the world. He carefully set it down on the open ground.

Nearing the coffin, Bi Yuntian's bloody hands gently wiped off the dirt on the coffin as if she was carefully polishing a priceless jewel.

"Sister Yunhai, twenty years have past by so fast. Do you still recognize me? It's me, your older sister Yuntian." Bi Yuntian muttered. "Yunhai, come home with your sister. I'll be by your side daily. You won't be lonely anymore, okay?"

Bi Lian half collapsed onto the coffin with tears flowing from her eyes in an endless stream. So heavy were her tears that her eyes had already grown red from crying too much.

"Mother, Bi Lian, we should hurry the coffin back to the city. After spending so many years buried in this wasteland, I am sure aunty is fed up with this place." Jian Chen consoled them.

This time, there was no opposition from Bi Yuntian and Bi Lian. They both agreed with Jian Chen's suggestion. Under Jian Chen's actions, he carried the coffin and left the area.

Holding the coffin, Jian Chen reentered Fengyang City under the eyes of countless of bystanders. They stared at him in complete flummox at this queer sight.

“Do you think that guy has an illness or something? Look at all that dirt, I bet he just dug it from the ground. Is he planning on entering the city with that? Doesn’t he know that it’s forbidden to do that?”

“He doesn’t know the rules at all I bet. Let’s watch and see if the guards stop him.”

Countless of soldiers and mercenaries pointed and jeered in Jian Chen’s direction as they ridiculed him.

With the coffin on his shoulder, Jian Chen quickly strode forward to enter the city.

One of the soldiers immediately came up to stop Jian Chen. Seeing that Jian Chen was carrying a coffin, the soldier took him to be a vagabond that couldn’t possibly have any money, and decided that there would be no need to be civil with him. With a high and mighty voice, he said, “Stop right there! Our Fengyang City has disallowed any coffin from entering the city. If you wish to enter the city...”

“Get lost!” Before he could even finish speaking, Jian Chen had already let out a loud command before kicking the soldier square in the chest to send the soldier flying.

“There’s a troublemaker! Arrest him!”

As if a nest of a hornet had been poked, a multitude of soldiers came flying out with their weapons raised. On top of the city walls, several soldiers had prepared their crossbows to fire at Jian Chen.

Jian Chen’s mood had been soured by today’s events, and with the annoying buzz of the soldiers, he felt his killing intent rise. With so many soldiers charging at him, Jian Chen’s eyes let out an icy glare before his killing intent billowed out from his body, dropping the surrounding temperature down several degrees. Anyone close to him immediately felt as if they had been plunged into icy-cold water, stopping them dead in their tracks.

On the city walls, the captain of the city guards muttered to himself, “Deary me. With the heads of the three major clans dead, our Fengyang City has lost a terrible amount of military might. Our city lord is the only Earth Saint Master left as a result from those obscenely strong youngsters back at the auction house. In age, they are younger than me, but in power, they are incomparably stronger than me. One of them is even a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master; they will become a Heaven Saint Master any day now. How inconceivable. How very inconceivable. I wonder which family they belong to.” The commander’s eyes reflected an envious look.

At the same time, the killing intent coming from Jian Chen had immediately shaken the commander from his thoughts.

Sensing the tremendous amount of killing intent, the commander turned pale with fright. Bolting up from his chair, he cried out, “What killing intent! Where is that coming from?” Before he had even finished his sentence, the commander was already running out from the building he was in.

When the commander saw the soldiers surrounding Jian Chen down below, his eyes immediately dilated and his face drained of any remaining color. In a frantic hurry, he cried out, “Stay your hand! Every soldier, stand down at once!” As he cried out, the commander thought back to the sight he had witnessed back at the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House. It had been deeply ingrained in his mind that this new group of people were not people they could offend at any costs.

Chapter 577: An Impressive Burial (One)

There had been no need for the commander to command them to stop, for the soldiers around Jian Chen were already at a complete stop. With terrified eyes, they observed the murderous aura radiating from Jian Chen in fear. Thoroughly intimidated by Jian Chen, not a single soldier dared to act as aggressive as before.

The commander feared that the soldiers had angered Jian Chen and that he would slaughter them all in anger, so the commander didn't delay for even a moment. He leaped off the wall to run to Jian Chen. When he saw the dark and foreboding expression on Jian Chen's face, the commander's face grew nervous and his body started to shake.

This youngster in front of him was the very person that feared not even the Harido clan. A power like that was far beyond what Fengyang City could even think of annoying.

"My lord, please quell your anger. This was a mistake born from my careless discipline. Your humble servant will properly penalize these bastards who have done you wrong. This one hopes that you will turn the other cheek and forego what has happened just now and let bygones be bygones." The commander hurriedly asked Jian Chen for forgiveness with an enchanting smile and a respectful salute. He was afraid that this small offense would cause another calamity to befall Fengyang City.

The commander carefully observed Jian Chen's face before he hurriedly turned around to look at the soldiers around them. He would definitely not be as respectful to these soldiers as he was to Jian Chen. His face darkened as he let a voice filled with a superior boom from his mouth, "You sightless bastards! How dare you act so rudely against the lord here? Are you tired of living? Who was the idiot to stand up against this lord here? Stand front and center to beg for forgiveness at once!"

There was a slight shuffle of hesitation within the soldiers before finally a pale-faced soldier came stumbling out from behind the group. There was a clear footprint on his chest, marking him as the soldier Jian Chen had first kicked.

Striding over to the soldier, he slammed his foot into the butt of the soldier and began to scold him, "Hurry up and beg forgiveness from the lord!"

The commander had kicked him so hard that the soldier fell flat onto the ground next to Jian Chen's feet. There was no anger in the soldier's face at all, only complete and utter fear. He was fully aware of the fact that he had angered the worst person possible.

"My lord, this lowly soldier has done wrong. This lowly soldier with no eyes has erred and wasted the precious time of my lord. My lord, please be generous and spare the life of your subordinate." The soldier lamented pitifully right in front of Jian Chen. Right now in the man's mind, his regret had been so huge that his intestines had gone green.

With a heavy and dark expression, Jian Chen's eyes frostily glared at the soldier in front of him. The series of events that had happened today had already caused his heart to feel down, causing his temperament to be crabbiest. When the soldier had stopped him from carrying the coffin of his aunt Yunhai into the city, Jian Chen had truly been ready to kill. If not for the timely apology from the commander, there would have most likely been a bloodbath in front of the city gates.

By this time, You Yue had moved to Jian Chen's side and held his left arm. "Jian Chen, let it go. There's no need to waste time on such small matters."

As a result of You Yue's words, the murderous aura around Jian Chen's body slowly ebbed away. Still staring icily at the soldier kneeling in front of him, he yelled, "Scram!"

Seeing that the situation had stabilized, the commander was able to let out the long breath of air he was holding mentally. Grabbing the clothes of the soldier and tossing him to the side, he cried out in anger, "Hurry up and move out of the way! Don't block the lord's path." A smile then greeted his face as he spoke to Jian Chen with a cordial tone, "My lord, if you would, please enter the city. This one won't hold up any more of your precious time. Please, have a nice trip!"

Despite Fengyang City decreeing that carrying unlucky items such as coffins were forbidden, Jian Chen's entrance brooked no attempt from the commander to stop him. On the contrary, the commander had welcomed him in with the utmost respect as if he was afraid of offending him.

Without another word, Jian Chen heaved the coffin with Bi Yunhai into the city. With a heavy expression behind him, Bi Yuntian, You Yue, Ming Dong, Tie Ta, and Bi Lian followed.

After they entered the city, the area near the city gates finally resumed its normal schedule. There had been plenty of people who had stopped as a result of the exchange, but not a single one of them spoke after the series of events that had transpired. Everyone could only stare at the retreating figures of Jian Chen and his group in silent awe.

In the eyes of the merchants and mercenaries, the city guards were not to be trifled with. Although these soldiers weren't stronger than the mercenaries, they were still representing the Blue Wind Kingdom's government as a military. In the case that there was conflict, the entire Blue Wind Kingdom would post a warrant or bounty for the one responsible if one did not have the proper backing.

The people who first saw the youngster carry the coffin toward the gates witnessed the youth kicking and injuring one of the guards, and also watched the very same youth be bowed down to and waited on like a dog by the commander of the city guards for forgiveness. Everyone could only try to guess what powerful status the youth held for the commander to fear him so much.

With the still dirty coffin held high on his shoulders, Jian Chen strode down the streets of the city, causing everyone to glance over at him. Whomever Jian Chen had passed, they would stop and turn to look at him with a bizarre expression.

Entering the city with a coffin in hand was an extremely rare sight to be seen in Fengyang City. Unlucky items like coffins were forbidden within the city. They could only be left outside.

However, plenty of them recognized Jian Chen as the one responsible for killing five Earth Saint Masters at the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House several days ago. It was with great fright that the look in their eyes turned fearful.

Soon enough, Jian Chen had brought the coffin back to the inn. Upon entering the inn, he had frightened one of the waiters who wailed straight away, "Customer, how could you bring a coffin into this establishment? Our city has forbidden the possession of one, please put it away, or you'll scare away the other customers."

The innkeeper came rushing out when he heard the commotion. When he saw the coffin, he said with an embarrassed expression, "Dear customer, if you could please find somewhere else to put the coffin. We cannot have such an item in our inn, otherwise, how will our other customers dare rest here?"

Striding forward, Ming Dong placed several purple coins into the innkeeper's palm, "Then we'll rent out the entire inn. If they're willing to stay here, then let them. If they don't, then they can get lost. Spare the words and get out of our way."

The stack of purple coins that Ming Dong gave the innkeeper was more than enough to pay for the expenses of the inn for several months. Seeing such a tremendous sum placed into his hand, the innkeeper's previously anxious eyebrows loosened and rose up in delight. Hurriedly putting away the coins, he replied, "Yes — well spoken. A coffin is only but a small matter — nothing worth worrying about at all. Dear guests, if you would please, come in!"

When Jian Chen and the others disappeared up the stairwell, the innkeeper clasped the purple coins with both hands in utmost delight. "How generous those lords are. These purple coins are far more than enough for this inn to operate for months! A windfall this was, this was definitely a profit for us."

Some of the mercenaries who had been eating off by the side chose that time to speak up, "Innkeeper, the word 'fear' doesn't exist in your dictionary, does it? Do you even know who those people who gave you money are?"

"Of course I know! They have to be the young lords of some well-off family. Where else would they have so much money?" The innkeeper laughed in response.

"Here, let me tell you. Those youngsters were the ones that killed the Earth Saint Masters of the three clans to this city. Even the two Earth Saint Masters from the Harido clan were killed off by them..." The mercenary explained.

Straight away, the innkeeper's face had drained of its color. "What? They're the ones that killed the three heads?"

The same mercenary nodded in confirmation. "Correct. The youth that gave you that stack of coins was an Earth Saint Master who is only a step away from becoming a Heaven Saint Master."

The shopkeeper's knees buckled from the realization. Falling to the floor in apparent weakness, he muttered despondently, "Dear heavens, I took their money and even had the gall to tell them to put their items elsewhere. I-I-I... I must be tired of living."

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Jian Chen and the others only stayed in that inn for another day before a whole platoon of soldiers and their Class 4 Magical Beast mounts came riding into Fengyang City. There were a total of fifty of them, and they all wore black armor.

When the city soldiers saw the Class 4 Magical Beasts, they didn't dare stop them. Without even questioning them, the city soldiers opened up the gates to let them into the city.

The group of fifty stampeded through the streets of Fengyang City before finally coming to a stop right outside the inn. Dismounting, they all strode into the inn and headed straight to Jian Chen's room.

“We pay our respects to the Imperial Protector!” The soldiers bent down in salute as they greeted Jian Chen.

Jian Chen’s eyes swept over the black-armored soldiers and then to the one leading the troop, “Qin Wujian, you arrived quickly I see.”

“If it is the command of the honored Imperial Protector, then your servant would not dare hesitate to command my soldiers here at once!” The armored man replied. He was one of the commanders from the Qinhuang Kingdom, Qin Wujian.

“Prepare a carriage and make the arrangements to transfer my aunty’s coffin back to the Gesun Kingdom.” Jian Chen instructed. In order to bring Bi Yunhai’s coffin back to the Gesun Kingdom, Jian Chen had decided to use a carriage to transport her back. It would serve as a way to honor Bi Yunhai and it would be the proper way to transport her back home. A matter like this shouldn’t be haphazardly arranged, so Jian Chen thought of the best way to resolve the matter.

Chapter 578: An Impressive Burial (Two)

It did not take too long for a grand carriage to come to a stop right in front of the inn. One could tell that this carriage was brand new just by looking at it. It was particularly pretty and had plenty of flowers on it, like it was a carriage decorated for a festival.

Jian Chen could be seen carrying the coffin of Bi Yunhai out of the inn before he carefully placed it into the carriage.

The carriage had previously been rented with a single Class 1 Magical Beast, but the beast had quickly been replaced with nine Class 4 Magical Beasts. That had been a major change for the inhabitants of Fengyang City at the very least. They had never heard of anyone using a Class 4 Magical Beast as a mount before.

After everything was finished, the group wasted no more time staying within the city. They slowly urged the carriage out from the city. Many of them chose to walk, but at least fifty of the Eastern Deity Sword soldiers remained seated on top of their Class 4 Magical Beast Mounts. Like loyal guards, they protected the carriage from both sides as it traveled down the roads, amid the people who talked about them.

Such a gathering was unprecedented within Fengyang City. Even the merchants and mercenaries that had been to plenty of cities felt stunned. Quickly moving out of the way when the carriage drew near, they all clearly saw the Class 4 Magical Beasts. The people that own them were definitely not people they could afford to mess with.

The carriage and the men guarding it left Fengyang City in a hurry, and now with a complete troop formation ready to pull the carriage, they traveled even faster. In a decent amount of time, the carriage arrived back within Gesun Kingdom.

Jian Chen had not forgotten about the head of the Yun family. He had a squadron of soldiers look after him from behind the carriage.

This short journey had taken roughly seven days before they arrived back at Lore City within the Gesun Kingdom. These seven days had not been much to Jian Chen, Ming Dong, or the other soldiers, but for Bi

Lian and Bi Yuntian who were not used to traveling long distances, their faces had grown sagged and weary halfway through the journey.

Even after returning home, Bi Yuntian disregarded her weary body and sought out the assistant housekeeper of the Changyang clan to arrange Bi Yunhai's funeral.

When he had heard the news, the assistant housekeeper looked hesitant, "Fourth lady, having a funeral for an outsider shortly after our Changyang clan was refurbished would be a little inappropriate. The elders of the clan will most likely not agree to such a thing."

Bi Yuntian's face grew dark as she said, "What outsider? This is my sister. Assistant housekeeper Xu, you will make the arrangements at once."

"That..." The man found himself stuck between a rock and a hard place. The Changyang clan was not some sort of two-bit clan. They were a clan of nobles within the Gesun Kingdom. Having a funeral for an outsider was something the assistant housekeeper found inappropriate.

"Did you hear what my mother said? What is so inappropriate about burying my aunty here? Hurry up and make the preparations." Jian Chen suddenly came toward them, giving the man a sharp glare.

After being hit by the angry eyes of Jian Chen, the assistant housekeeper began to tremble, "Ye-yes! A thousand pardons, fourth master. This servant will make the preparations right away." When Jian Chen had spoke up, the man didn't dare to speak back to him. Jian Chen held the highest position within the Changyang Clan, and the man was more than aware of it. The honor and glory that the Changyang clan had obtained was solely due to Jian Chen's contributions.

When Jian Chen spoke, not a single person, not even the elders of the clan, would dare speak a word that would conflict with his own.

Under the management of the assistant housekeeper, the imperial guards and servants of the clan immediately moved into action to prepare for a funeral and the necessary arrangements. In the end, it had been Chang Wuji himself that came forward to give advice to the others.

Under the combined efforts of hundreds, it had taken half a day before everything was complete. Bi Yunhai's coffin had fresh flowers arranged all around it. Bi Yuntian had hung a scroll with her sister's likeness on it from the memories of years ago. From the image, Bi Yunhai looked to be a very regal person, and one could see the very close similarities between she and Bi Yuntian because of the vividness of the image. The only defect in the image was on the face of Bi Yunhai. There was a rather malicious scar.

After everything was done, a ceremonious burial project began. The rest of Lore City found the burial ceremony rather strange and confusing since it was arranged during a prosperous time for the Changyang clan. At the same time, it caused a ripple of gossip to resonate across Lore City. In a flash, the head of the other three major clans of Lore City came to visit and inquire what in the world had happened. At the same time, several of the smaller factions came by as well to express their sympathies. They also hoped that they could join the funeral themselves and earn them some small favors from the clan.

After the second day of the funeral, the king of the Gesun Kingdom came to Lore City along with his commander, Bi Dao, and roughly five hundred soldiers. Even the headmaster of Kargath Academy, Khafir, had been informed and flew from his academy to visit.

With the peculiar status of the Changyang clan, the entire future of the Gesun Kingdom was now relying upon the clan. Now that a funeral had suddenly popped up in the clan, the entire city had been startled and wondered just which important person had left the world. For that reason, the major powers of the kingdom came rushing on over.

When they all realized that it was Bi Yuntian's long-separated sister, they all let out a secret sigh of relief. Bi Dao on the other hand still felt rather depressed.

News of the funeral quickly made its way around the area, and soon, the many factions of the Gesun Kingdom were made aware of the happenings within the Changyang clan. This had prompted plenty of important figures to come flying to Lore City to express their sympathies.

Even the two grand elders of the Hua Yun Sect came by in person. One reason they came was to express their condolences, the other reason was to give their apologies for what had transpired between them and Jian Chen all those years ago. They even brought along a hefty sum to help their apology.

In short, the funeral of Bi Yunhai was very important. Not only did the major factions of the Gesun Kingdom come to visit, the king himself came to pay his respects.

The funeral continued for seven whole days before wrapping up. This time, Bi Yunhai's grave was no longer in a desolate place like before. Instead it was in the courtyard where Bi Yuntian lived within the compound. A jewel made specifically for the purpose of fengshui had been affixed to Bai Yunhai's grave, and had made the grave into a very grandiose one.

With the funeral ending, every visiting party slowly went back home. Only Bi Dao was left remaining within the household. Like a statue, he remained upright in front of Bi Yunhai's grave for three days without moving, but his face revealed pain.

Bi Dao and Bi Yuntian were both siblings under the same parents, meaning that the parents of Bi Yunhai were also the very same parents of Bi Dao. Not only did they have the cleanest blood ties, he and Bi Yunhai had also been very close playmates since they were young.

"Sister Yunhai, I never thought that you survived that day as well, and in a neighboring city as well. Why did I not hear about you sooner? If I had known, I would have gathered the three of us together to live. But, now, now we are separated once more by the borders of yin and yang." Bi Dao's eyes stared sorrowfully at the grave as he whispered to it.

Bi Yuntian pulled Bi Lian's arm to him, "Brother, this the daughter that sister Yunhai left behind. Her name is Bi Lian. Bi Lian, this is your uncle."

Looking to the armor-wearing Bi Dao, Bi Lian let out a filial-sounding phrase, "Uncle."

Bi Dao's eyes finally tore themselves from the grave to look to the eighteen year old Bi Lian with complicated emotions. After a moment of silence, he finally said, "Although my younger sister Bi Yunhai has left us, she left behind a child for us."

“Bi Lian. You needn’t worry. Your uncle will protect you from now on.”

For the first time in forever, Bi Lian felt that she finally had a warm family that cared and loved her. A family that could protect her. A family that was completely different than the Yun family. Tears began to fall from her eyes because of her new family.

Bi Dao looked back to the grave of Yunhai once more, “Where is the murderer of Yunhai!?”

“He has been locked within the tinder house. We don’t wish for him to die so easily, so we left him there for the time being.” Jian Chen responded. Bi Lian had already given the captive the antidote to the poison he had been administered, so he was in no danger of dying from it just yet.

Jian Chen hesitated when he saw Bi Dao swiftly turn to walk to the tinder house. “Uncle, don’t let him die so easily!”

“I know!” Bi Dao didn’t even bother to turn around to respond. He quickly walked out of Jian Chen’s sight.

Not long after his disappearance, a miserable wail could be heard coming from within the Changyang clan. It was such a pain-filled wail that everyone that heard it could tell that that person was being tortured.

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In the blink of an eye, half a month passed, and the funeral that had been held within the Changyang clan finally died down and was soon forgotten by everyone. Even Bi Lian and Bi Yuntian found the pain in their hearts slowly dull, but despite that, a smile could hardly be seen on their faces.

Bi Dao stayed within Changyang Manor for another half month during this time. The hatred he felt for the one that killed Bi Yunhai had been etched within his bones, and every day he would use the cruelest methods he knew in order to treat the head of the Yun family to a hell of pain. After exhausting all the methods he knew on the man’s body, Bi Dao had then given the man an excruciatingly slow death. Once dead he threw out the man’s body into the plains for the wild animals to eat. What the man had suffered while alive and dead could be described to be the worst experience to feel on the continent.

After the death of the head of the Yun family, the vendetta for Bi Yunhai had finally reached an end. Bi Dao didn’t stay much longer after that and had left for the imperial palace the day after.

After Bi Dao left, Jian Chen and the others gathered together along with his parents and the others from the clan. They were preparing to leave the compound to continue to develop the Flame Mercenaries.

“Cousin, please let me go with you.” Suddenly, Bi Lian asked to join Jian Chen with an earnest look on her face.

Chapter 579: Carnage Mercenaries

Puzzled, Jian Chen looked to Bi Lian, “Bi Lian, the road I walk is very terrifying and fraught with dangerous and gruesome deaths. A young woman like you shouldn’t involve yourself with such a lifestyle.” After these few days, Jian Chen had slowly warmed up to her and had even started to consider her a sister.

“Lian’er, the continent is very dangerous with very few safe sanctuaries. You shouldn’t travel outside, stay here in Changyang Manor; no one will mistreat you here.” Bi Yuntian explained.

Bi Lian shook her head as she pleaded, “Aunty, I don’t wish to stay here forever. I was unable to venture out by myself in the past. I wish to experience what the continent is like for myself. Cousin, please take me along with you.”

Jian Chen hesitated for a moment before finally agreeing to her request, “Fine then. If you want to come with us, then you can. Seeing how dangerous the continent is would be a boon for you in any case. Since you haven’t materialized your Saint Weapon, I could also give you some cultivation advice to help accelerate your growth.”

Hearing Jian Chen speak, Bi Yuntian knew that she couldn’t hold back her niece anymore. With a warning to Jian Chen, she said, “Xiang’er, you must protect your cousin well. She is still weak. Do not let anything happen to her at all costs.”

“Mother, please rest assured. I will definitely protect Bi Lian.” Jian Chen pledged. Now that he had gained a cousin, Jian Chen felt like he was finally an older brother. At the same time, he felt as if another weight had been placed onto his shoulders now that he had to protect his younger cousin as well.

Jian Chen and Bi Lian bid farewell to the entire clan before leaving together. They were headed back to the Blue Wind Kingdom.

Two days later, Jian Chen and the others entered the borders of the Blue Wind Kingdom. Then with another half day of travel, they entered the First Class City that was known as the “Cloud Capital.”

If Jian Chen and the others were to ride their Class 3 Magical Beasts into a city like Wake City, it would have caused quite a stir. However, the sight of such mounts were common within the Cloud Capital.

Compared to a Second Class City, a First Class City was far more prosperous. There were plenty of people riding on Class 3 Magical Beasts in the First Class City, Cloud Capital. There had even been a single Class 4 Magical Beast on the streets. Plenty of mercenaries crowded the streets, and the majority of them were Saint Masters or Great Saint Masters at the very least. Compared to Fengyang City, this city was completely different.

Jian Chen’s group found a nearby inn to rest for the night before Ming Dong and Dugu Feng scouted the city for information. Tie Ta went with the two to walk around the city in hopes that he could learn a few things about the rules of society and how to survive.

After the three of them left, only Jian Chen, You Yue, and Bi Lian were left within the inn. At this moment, the three of them were seated in the higher levels of the inn, and were slowly eating the local delicacies. While sampling the delicious food, they listened to the bored chatter of the other mercenaries in hopes that they could glean some information from their gossip.

Jian Chen heard nothing of interest even after listening to them for a long time. These mercenaries talked about nothing other than what happened during their daily lives and would sometimes talk about how many magical beasts and monster cores they had gained that day. One of the mercenaries had even begun to drone about some of the prostitutes on the level above them.

Ming Dong and the other two had made a quick retreat after learning all that they could. Taking a seat at the table, Ming Dong whispered to Jian Chen, "Brother, I've researched all that I could, but the power structure in this city is far more complicated than the clear one in Fengyang City."

Ming Dong paused for a moment before taking a sip of wine from his cup. After finishing off the cup, he continued to say, "On the upside, there are six major powers to the Cloud Capital; four clans and two sects. These six powers appear to be the strongest that the Cloud Capital has to offer. Each one of these associations is very close and interconnected with the others. After several hundred years of development, I think that they're on the verge of becoming a single huge family with blood lines connected to and from each power.

"Aside from those six powers, there's a few other clans and mercenary groups that aren't too low in power compared to them. Each one of them has an Earth Saint Master as their leader, but their names aren't as influential as the six leading powers. From what I can tell, there are several clans that have multiple Earth Saint Masters."

"Aside from the clans, which mercenary groups are strong in this city?" Jian Chen asked.

"There's a total of four that I found. There's the Bloodthorn Mercenaries, the Bloodrose Mercenaries, the Feral Mercenaries, and the Carnage Mercenaries. Now, the relationship between the Bloodthorn Mercenaries and the Bloodrose Mercenaries is very interesting. I've heard that the captain of the Bloodrose Mercenaries is very beautiful but feisty. The captain of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries deeply loves her and has sought her attention for many years. They aren't a couple yet, but it is rather complicated between them I heard. Whatever the details are, I don't know, but I do know that the two of them could be considered a single faction."

"The Feral Mercenaries shouldn't be belittled either. They are the most well known mercenary group in the Cloud Capital, and their captain is the sworn brother of the ruler of the city. Every single faction within Cloud Capital has to give that group some face."

"As for the Carnage Mercenaries, they aren't a stable power within the city. Rather, they were once free-roamers that eventually settled in the Cloud Capital five years ago and never left. Still, they are quite strong, but their numbers are lacking with roughly three hundred people. Each one of them are elite warriors, and I heard that their weakest member is a Saint Master in strength. Fifty of them are Great Saint Masters at the very least, and I heard that the captain and his two vice-captains are Earth Saint Masters, making them the sole power within the city to have three Earth Saint Masters. Combined with the Bloodrose and the Bloodthorn Mercenaries, the Carnage Mercenaries make even the lord of the city fearful."

"But the Carnage Mercenaries are still relatively low-profile within the city. It took plenty of time and energy for the three of us to make the inquiries, but we managed to find out that there has been very little movement from them in their five years of residency here. Every single member seems to hide away in their compound without ever coming out. With no way of income and no other property, it is a very mysterious situation."

"Carnage Mercenaries!" Jian Chen muttered with a pensive look on his face. When Ming Dong had mentioned their name, Jian Chen had found that mercenary group to be strange as well.

“Cousin, the Carnage Mercenaries have to be hiding something if they never come out from their spot. Could they all be cultivating? Or perhaps they have some sort of enemy and are afraid of being discovered?” Bi Lian guessed with glimmering eyes. She looked to the handsome face of Jian Chen with eyes of worship.

Thinking for a moment, Jian Chen replied, “It’s hard to say. Ming Dong, where are the Carnage Mercenaries?”

“They’re not too far away from here. Just head ten kilometers that way and you’ll arrive at a large courtyard. All three hundred of the mercenaries live there.” Ming Dong replied.

Jian Chen closed his eyes and began to spread his presence in the direction Ming Dong had said. In a flash, he located the courtyard where the Carnage Mercenaries were located with absolute clarity.

Bi Lian had guessed correctly. All three hundred of the mercenaries were hidden away within the building cultivating. Each one of them held a Class 3 or Class 4 Monster Core, meaning that they were all exceptionally wealthy while several others were stationed around the courtyard as sentries. In the middle of the courtyard, three Earth Saint Masters were trying their best to cultivate as well.

Reopening his eyes, Jian Chen muttered, “The Carnage Mercenaries have much more to them as we inferred.”

“If they were just a simple power, then the Carnage Mercenaries wouldn’t have been known as the strongest group in the city. Jian Chen, do you think we should subjugate them first?” Ming Dong asked.

“The Carnage Mercenaries are still quite mysterious. I think we should first investigate their background to see if they have any support behind them, and if they do, we should see how large it is.” Dugu Feng proposed.

Ming Dong’s eyebrows narrowed together, “The Carnage Mercenaries remain far too low-profile. Although they’ve been here for five years, the amount of information on them is ridiculously small. I had to expend an absurd amount of time and energy to find what I did. That’s not even probing about their background. I think that only the major powers of the Cloud Capital know about them, but I don’t know much about those powers. If we want to learn more, it won’t be easy.”

“Fine then, that’s enough discussion. The Carnage Mercenaries are extremely strange. Nothing more needs to be said about that. We should pay them a visit and see if there’s a chance we learn anything about them.” Jian Chen spoke.

After that, the group left the inn. They rode away on their Class 3 Magical Beasts, headed toward the courtyards where the Carnage Mercenaries stayed.

Chapter 580: Subjugation (One)

Following a brief moment of time later, Jian Chen and his entourage arrived at the courtyards where the Carnage Mercenaries were located. The building the Carnage Mercenaries lived in wasn’t very small, but there had been no attempt made to clean the building at all. The simple doors were closed shut and had a layer of dust to them. At a glance, anyone would know that the area had not been swept in a very long time. Several footsteps could be seen right in front of the gates as well.

Jian Chen surveyed the courtyards for a while before chuckling, "I don't know if the Carnage Mercenaries are too lazy to clean or if they're lazy in general, but the fact that their doorfront is so dirty is quite unique."

"The Carnage Mercenaries are far more secretive than we thought. If they were like the other powers in this city, then they would have kept their doorfront far cleaner than this." Ming Dong replied in amazement.

"Why don't we go in and take a look." Jian Chen suggested.

One by one, they filed into the courtyards with their magical beast mounts while Dugu Feng swiftly strode forward to knock on the heavy gates.

Not long after, the gates began to open slowly to reveal a forty year old male. The man was bald, but his eyes were piercingly sharp and there was a very malevolent scar on his face that added to his intimidation factor.

Suspicious, the man's eyes glanced over the young women in front of the gates before speaking with an impassive voice, "Who are you?"

"We are members of the Flame Mercenaries here today to pay a visit." Jian Chen responded with a smile. He cupped his hands with practiced ease.

"The Flame Mercenaries?" The man muttered under his breath as his eyebrows furrowed together. This was a foreign name to him, and there was no faction called the Flame Mercenaries from what he knew about the Cloud Capital.

The man studied Jian Chen and the others a second time before his face darkened. "It is a rather inconvenient time for our Carnage Mercenaries to be receiving any guests, so if you could please return home." As he spoke, the man's head started to retreat back behind the door while he was closing it. Even as he tried to do so, he found that the door would not budge.

Dugu Feng's hand was stopping the door from moving even the slightest inch, preventing the bald man from closing the door.

A sharp glare made its way into the bald man's eyes as he saw this. "Sire, what is the meaning of this?" He questioned with a heavy expression.

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, "Is this how the Carnage Mercenaries treat visitors when they come to visit?" Walking straight in, he opened the next set of doors and headed into the inner courtyards.

Startled, the man moved to stop Jian Chen from heading further in. He also said, "Sire, this is the territory of the Carnage Mercenaries. If you continue to act in such an impetuous manner, then do not blame me for my rudeness." His warning was clear and loud enough for the other sentries in the area to hear.

At least twenty men came running in from every direction, gathering in the courtyards. Each one of them had a penetrating glare that honed in on Jian Chen and the others with murderous intent that was filled with hostility.

Seeing the malicious expressions on everyone's faces, Ming Dong and Dugu Feng revealed looks of disdain.

"The captain of our Flame Mercenaries personally came here to visit your Carnage Mercenaries; that much in itself is already a great honor. Yet, not only do you not reciprocate that kindness, you also turn us away at your door. Is that how your Carnage Mercenaries treat guests? Hurry up and call your captain at once!" Ming Dong sneered. The power of an Earth Saint Master came exploding forth from his body all at once. It filled the entire courtyard with a dominating presence and caused each of the Carnage Mercenaries to take a step back in shock. Straight away, even more of the mercenaries came running out from within the courtyards.

"Hahaha, if there are guests, then our Carnage Mercenaries will definitely welcome them with open arms. Please forgive my subordinates for not understanding that. I hope that you will forgive me for my negligence as well and that you won't take this slight too seriously."

Suddenly, a clear and crisp laughter could be heard coming from in front of them as three men with luxurious-looking robes came striding into the open area. The one who had spoken was the one in the middle. This man was about forty years in age and was rather handsome in looks. He had all five features still on his pale face, and his sharp eyebrows did nothing to hide the twinkling light in his eyes. His smile was filled with warmth and friendliness that left a favorable impression of him.

On his left was yet another middle-aged man that did not vary too much in age from him. This man wore an expensive white robe that was rather regal. A seemingly feral presence could be barely detected radiating from his body; a feeling like this gave off the feeling of a wolf hidden under a sheep's skin. Something about him was off.

On his right was an elderly man approaching his seventies. His face was covered with wrinkles and half of his white hair was already gone so that very little remained on his rather ruined head. A sight like that made him look like he would keel over at any moment and die.

Despite his looks, the elder's eyes flashed brightly with spirit and with unbelievable depth. It was almost as if a fog of smoke covered his eyes since one would not be able to see what he was thinking.

"Captain!"

"Captain!"

"We pay our respects to captain and the vice-captains!"

Straight away, the twenty or so Carnage Mercenaries began to salute the three men with eyes that reflected their worship.

Stopping in front of Jian Chen, the middle-aged man's eyes landed on both Dugu Feng and Ming Dong. They were both standing right behind Jian Chen. Finally, his eyes moved to Jian Chen before he smiled and cupped his hands together, "This one is the captain of the Carnage Mercenaries, Zhan Tian. These two men next to me are my vice-captains, Shan Xiong and Mu Chi."

Jian Chen's eyes studied the three while simultaneously cupping his hands in return. "This one is called Jian Chen, captain of the Flame Mercenaries. This person here is Ming Dong, the vice-captain, and this is Dugu Feng, an elder of my Flame Mercenaries..."

When Zhan Tian heard Ming Dong's name, his mind found it rather familiar as if he had heard it before. However, he paid it no mind since he had to greet the guests. Thus, he put the thought away for the time being. Putting up an amiable smile, he began to escort the group in, "Haha, please come in. We can talk inside."

Jian Chen and the others were escorted by Zhan Tian into the inner halls, which were simple in decoration and did not at all resemble the halls of a place of a strong faction.

After a small discussion between Jian Chen and Zhan Tian, the two quickly got to the crux of the problem.

"Sire Zhan Tian, I can see that you and your mercenaries are all gathered inside and spend everyday cultivating with monster cores without ever going out. I can only assume that some family is behind yours, is that right?" Jian Chen didn't hesitate to speak his thoughts at all.

Hearing Jian Chen's statement, Zhan Tian had not been startled at all. It had been five years since he and his mercenaries had settled in this city, so what he and his mercenaries were doing in this building was already known as a public secret.

"Haha, brother Jian Chen, you are surely joking! My Carnage Mercenaries is only a small time group that relies only on me. What other family is there to support us?" Despite this, Zhan Tian displayed a small look of pain and what seemed to be misery.

Jian Chen had not expected to see such an expression on Zhan Tian's face, but he immediately guessed that it was more likely than not that the Carnage Mercenaries had no one but themselves to rely upon.

With that thinking, Jian Chen immediately felt some happiness. "Sire Zhan Tian, this one didn't come here for no reason. This time, I have a matter of business that I wished to discuss with you."

Zhan Tian's face immediately grew solemn as he stared back at Jian Chen with bright eyes to await the new few words from him.

"Sire Zhan Tian, you are more than aware of the rules of the Tian Yuan Continent. The strong feed off the weak, and only the strong are worthy of earning even more power. But gaining power isn't as easy as it sounds, it is a very long road with plenty of obstacles. Lose your footing even once and you might not ever recover."

"So I came today this time to see if you would like to join our Flame Mercenaries. With our powers combined, we will definitely increase the strength of our group. Would sire Zhan Tian agree to such an endeavor?"

Hearing this, Zhan Tian and the others could only stare in abject shock at Jian Chen. Not a single one of them thought that Jian Chen would come visit them with this goal in mind.

The three of them quickly regained their wits. Zhan Tian and the elder Mu Chi were both very calm on the surface, but Shan Xiong was not as well-tempered as they were. A look of fury overcame his face as he glared at Jian Chen with all the anger he could muster.

"So you wish for our Carnage Mercenaries to submit to your Flame Mercenaries? Hah, how audacious of you. How could you find it in you to even say such words?" Shan Xiong furiously roared.

